

with flat sides and a strong median keel, with third vertebral shields longer than the second. Dorso-median keel pink with black border. Plastron yellow with large black blotches on each scute. Head olive-brown with a pink broken band on the occipital region and a pink postocular spot. A smaller pink mark located at dorsal posterior edge of the eye. Neck with indistinct stripes, limbs olive with uncleared spots. Dark olive and cream coloured vertical stripes on rump region.

According to the literature *K. tentoria* occurs in the Mahanadi and Godavari rivers and probably the Krishna river system (Smith 1933). According to Moll (1987), 3 subspecies of the Indian Tent Terrapin *K. tentoria* are

recognized: *K.t. tentoria* in the rivers of peninsular India, *K.t. flaviventer* in the eastern Ganges and its northern tributaries and *K.t. circumdata* in western and central drainage of the Ganges river.

The present record of the Pinkringed Terrapin *K.t. circumdata* from river Tapti near Surat district, Gujarat, considerably extends the range of the species.

I am thankful to Mr Raju Vyas, Zoo Inspector of the Sayaji Baug Zoo, Baroda, for identification and suggestions.

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REFERENCES

MOLL, E.O. (1987): Survey of the freshwater turtles of India. Part II: the Genus *Kachuga*. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 84: 7-25.

SMITH, M.A. (1933): The Fauna of British India. Rept. & Amphibia Vol. I, Taylor and Francis, London.

25. A PECULIAR FOOD HABIT OF THE GARDEN LIZARD *CALOTES VERSICOLOR* (DAUDIN)

The report by Sekar (1988), where he mentions that buds of *Tabernaemontana* were fed upon by a garden lizard *Calotes versicolor* (Daudin), prompted us to add the following information on the vegetarian food habits of the reptile. We had a small kitchen garden at our residence in Malaparamba in Calicut and during two occasions we observed a medium sized garden lizard chewing the tender succulent shoots of cowpea (*Vigna sinensis*); however, it

never attempted to swallow the chewed plant material. Since we observed this type of behaviour during the afternoons of hot summer months (April/May) we presume that the garden lizard was attempting to derive some moisture from the plant tissue rather than utilising it as a food material.

January 3, 1989.

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REFERENCE

SEKAR, A.G. (1988): A note on the food habits of the gar-

den lizard, *Calotes versicolor*. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 85: 199.

26. NEW EVIDENCE OF THE OCCURRENCE OF WATER MONITOR (*VARANUS SALVATOR*) IN MEGHALAYA

The distribution of the Water Monitor (*Varanus salvator*) in the western parts of its range is enigmatic. This otherwise adaptable species is to be found mainly in the coastal areas of Orissa, in the deltas of Brahmini-Baitarini, the Sunderbans of West Bengal and Bangladesh; Sri Lanka, and on many of the islands in the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago (reviewed by Whitaker and Whitaker 1980, distribution maps in Das 1980). The lizard is absent along the rest of the eastern coast of India and the distribution, in general, in the region appears similar to that of the Saltwater Crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*). The reason for the absence of both species in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu appears to be a result of hunting, and the destruction of their mangrove habitats. Fairly large populations

of *V. salvator* do, however, still occur in several pockets south of Calcutta city which were once dominated by mangroves, and Finn (1929) wrote that a large specimen used to frequent Calcutta's Zoological Gardens (at Alipore) in the 1890's.

Varanus salvator, however, has also been reported from regions in India far from the coast. Anderson (1872) reported that the species was not uncommon in Assam. Smith (1935) included the eastern Himalayas in the distribution of the species, but listed no specific localities. Auffenburg (1986) stated that the species occurred in Assam.

The Zoological Survey of India has a specimen (ZSI 2155) from Samagooting in the Naga hills, Nagaland. The